The following PhD vacancies and research topics within the School of Humanities were compiled in November 2013 and were correct at the time of publication.

For further guidance on pursuing a PhD in any of these areas, please consult the relevant department’s website or contact the relevant members of academic staff as listed below.

Department of Archaeology

The Department of Archaeology welcomes applications for PhD or MA (by Research) or MSc (by Research) degrees. We have particular strengths in the following areas: Prehistoric and Historical (Roman and medieval) archaeology of Europe and the Mediterranean; Underwater archaeology; Bioarchaeology (zooarchaeology, archaeobotany, Human origins); and Archaeological materials science, with a cross theme on Mediterranean archaeology. The department is also integrated with the Centre for Spartan and Peloponnesian Studies, the Institute of Medieval Research and the Centre for Underwater Archaeology Research. Specific themes and associated members of staff are listed below; we would encourage any applicant with an interest in these areas to contact the relevant members of staff prior to an application.

Medieval archaeology: Chris Loveluck’s areas of research supervision

Supervisor: Chris Loveluck (christopher.loveluck@nottingham.ac.uk)

Dr Chris Loveluck is willing to supervise projects on the archaeology of early medieval societies in northwest Europe and Scandinavia, between c. AD 400 and 1200 (especially in relation to rural settlements, coastal societies, towns and trade and exchange).

Medieval archaeology: Chris King’s areas of research supervision

Supervisor: Chris King (chris.king@nottingham.ac.uk)

Dr Chris King works on medieval and historical archaeology, with a particular focus on urban landscapes and standing buildings. He can supervise students working on these topics across the broad range of global historical archaeology as well as Britain and Europe, from the medieval period to the nineteenth century.

Roman archaeology

Supervisor: Will Bowden (will.bowden@nottingham.ac.uk)
Dr Will Bowden works on Roman and late antique urbanism and the ways in which identities are expressed through the urban and rural built environment in the Roman and late Roman period, focusing in particular on Britain and the Mediterranean. He also study the ways that changing past identities are manifested in the archaeological record and the ways in which the past is used in the present day. Dr Bowden would be interested in supervising students with research projects relating to any of these areas.

**Prehistoric Europe and the Mediterranean: Chrysanthi Gallou’s areas of research**

**Supervisor:** Chrysanthi Gallou ([chrysanthi.gallou@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:chrysanthi.gallou@nottingham.ac.uk))

Dr Chrysanthi Gallou is a specialist in Aegean prehistory. She is particularly interested in supervising projects on the archaeology of cult and death in prehistoric and Early Iron Age Aegean, the archaeology of children and childhood Greece (prehistoric and Iron Age), coastal settlement patterns and maritime routes in southern Greece (prehistoric and Iron Age), prehistoric megalithic monuments in the eastern Mediterranean, Spartan and Laconian archaeology [particularly on a. religion and ritual, b. production patterns/networks and artefact studies (prehistoric)], and on public archaeology with a focus on prehistoric Aegean.

**Prehistoric Europe and the Mediterranean: Mark Pearce’s areas of research**

**Supervisor:** Mark Pearce ([mark.pearce@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:mark.pearce@nottingham.ac.uk))

Dr Mark Pearce specialises in early mining and metallurgy and Italian prehistory. He also works on British prehistory (Neolithic and Bronze Age) particularly in the East Midlands. He can supervise students in a broad range of topics within those fields.

**Underwater Archaeology and Iron Age Europe**

**Supervisor:** Jon Henderson ([john.henderson@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:john.henderson@nottingham.ac.uk))

Dr Jon Henderson is an underwater archaeologist with specific research interests in submerged prehistoric settlements. He is willing to supervise projects on submerged prehistoric settlements, Prehistoric maritime landscapes in the Mediterranean, the development of underwater digital survey and excavation technologies (including optical and sonar survey applications), and lake dwellings and wetland settlement. Dr Henderson also works on the western European Iron Age and would be interested in projects on Iron Age Scotland, the coastal settlement and society of the Atlantic Iron Age and Scottish crannogs.

**Bioarchaeology: Alexandra Livarda’s areas of research supervision**
Supervisor:  **Alexandra Livarda** ([alexandra.livarda@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:alexandra.livarda@nottingham.ac.uk))

Dr Alexandra Livarda is an archaeobotanist with particular research interests in the archaeology of food and the social geographies of plants. She is particularly interested in supervising projects on food, trade and society, the bioarchaeology of ritual and religion, Aegean archaeobotany, commensality and archaeology, food and taste, the biography of plants and the archaeology of gardens.

**Bioarchaeology:  **Hannah O’Regan’s areas of research supervision**

Supervisor:  **Hannah O’Regan** ([#hannah.o’regan@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:#hannah.o’regan@nottingham.ac.uk))

Dr Hannah O’Regan researches the evolution, palaeoecology and dispersal of Quaternary mammals (including hominins). She would be interested in supervising projects on African and European hominin and carnivore palaeoecology. Dr O’Regan is interested in projects on cave archaeology from historic and prehistoric periods.

**Bioarchaeology:  **Naomi Sykes' areas of research supervision**

Supervisor:  **Naomi Sykes** ([naomi.sykes@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:naomi.sykes@nottingham.ac.uk))

Dr Naomi Sykes supervises research into human-animal-landscape interactions in order to determine the structure, beliefs, practices and environmental impact of ancient societies. Her research utilises archaeological evidence to try and address environmental and social issues in the present day and to think about strategies for the future and she is keen to supervise students with similar research interests.

**Archaeological Materials and the Silk Road**

Supervisor:  **Julian Henderson** ([julian.henderson@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:julian.henderson@nottingham.ac.uk))

Professor Julian Henderson’s principle research project is the Silk Road. He researches ancient technologies, including glass. He would be interested in applicants for projects which will focus on the scientific analysis of glass and glazed ceramics, especially from the Silk Road, particularly in the Middle East (including Iraq) and central Asia, to investigate provenance, trade and technology transfer in a broad archaeological and cultural context.
American art post-1945, with a particular emphasis on the role of California and the West, and the legacies of surrealism
Supervisor:  Lucy Bradnock (lucy.bradnock@nottingham.ac.uk)

American modernism, American photography, visual culture, and critical/visual theory
Supervisor:  Mark Rawlinson (mark.rawlinson@nottingham.ac.uk)

British landscape and its global resonances in historic and contemporary perspectives
Supervisor:  Nicholas Alfrey (nicholas.alfrey@nottingham.ac.uk)

China and Japan as sites of study, travel and collecting and their presence in western cultures
Supervisor:  Ting Chang (ting.chang@nottingham.ac.uk)

Collecting and the art market in the seventeenth century, especially Britain, the Netherlands, and Italy
Supervisor:  Jeremy Wood (jeremy.wood@nottingham.ac.uk)

French art, criticism, and visual culture from 1700-1850; Histories of photography; Representations of Rome, from the Baroque to modernity
Supervisor:  Richard Wrigley (richard.wrigley@nottingham.ac.uk)

Italian landscape and its cultural politics; Italian and avant-garde cinema
Supervisor:  Lara Pucci (lara.pucci@nottingham.ac.uk)
Venetian Renaissance and gender politics
Supervisor: Gabriele Neher (gabriele.neher@nottingham.ac.uk)

Department of Classics
www.nottingham.ac.uk/classics/research

A number of the Department’s research strengths are reflected in the role of staff in various Institutes and Centres.

Prof. Stephen Hodkinson is Director of the interdisciplinary Institute for the Study of Slavery, and has particular interests in helotage in Sparta, while Dr Kostas Vlassopoulos’ research includes slavery in the ancient Greek world.

The Centre for Ancient Drama and its Reception reflects the Department’s particular concentration of scholars in this field – Prof. Judith Mossman (Euripides), Prof. Patrick Finglass (Sophocles), Dr Oliver Thomas (tragedy, especially Aeschylus), and Dr Betine Van Zyl Smit (Roman drama).

The Centre for Spartan and Peloponnesian Studies is a joint venture between members of the Departments of Classics and Archaeology, represented again in Classics by Prof. Hodkinson and Dr Vlassopoulos.

The Centre for Late Antique and Byzantine Studies builds on Nottingham’s long tradition of research in late antiquity, and is represented by Dr Doug Lee, along with colleagues in Archaeology.

Other areas of particular research interest are visuality and narrative, especially in Roman art and literature (Dr Katharina Lorenz, Dr Helen Lovatt, Dr Lynn Fotheringham), society and cultural interactions (Dr Mark Bradley, Dr Esther Eidinow, Dr Andreas Kropp, Dr Thomas, Dr Vlassopoulos), religion and magic (Dr Eidinow, Dr Kropp, Dr Thomas), hermeneutics, especially textual analysis and commentary (Prof. Finglass (Sophocles), Prof. Mossman (Euripides, Plutarch), Dr Fotheringham (Cicero), Dr Simon Malloch (Tacitus)), war and society (Prof. Hodkinson, Dr Lee), and receptions of the classical world (Dr Bradley, Prof. Hodkinson, Dr Fotheringham, Dr Lovatt, Prof. Mossman, Dr Van Zyl Smit, Dr Vlassopoulos).

Several retired members of staff continue to contribute to the Department’s research culture as Emeritus Professors, and are available to share the supervision of research students, in particular Prof. John Drinkwater (late Roman history, especially Gaul and Germany), Prof. John Rich (Roman republican history and historiography), and Prof. Alan Sommerstein (Greek drama).
Eastern and western Christian heresies in the high middle ages

Supervisor: Claire Taylor (claire.k.taylor@nottingham.ac.uk)

The nature of Western-European religious heresy in the high middle ages (c.1000-c.1300) is currently the subject of a great deal of debate. This includes the extent to which it was indigenous or influenced by Balkan and Byzantine dualism, specifically the Paulician and Bogomil heresies. Whilst almost every aspect of the western phenomena is currently being re-opened to reinterpretation, the nature of eastern heresy is not receiving the same rigorous attention, even though this could shed a good deal of light on the question. should be addressed. A doctoral thesis in this area would explore political, religious, economic, social and cultural contexts for the rise of eastern heresy, and explore aspects such as ritual and organisational similarities, east-west communications, and the location of heretical sects.

Southern French case-studies in medieval heresy

Supervisor: Dr Claire Taylor (claire.k.taylor@nottingham.ac.uk)

As with several historiographical controversies in medieval studies, the question of the nature of popular heresy is being advanced through micro-historical and regional approaches, dealing with limited data sets, sometimes in a comparative fashion. There remain several southern French towns and counties which could be subject to such an approach, investigating in particular the Cathar and Waldensian heresies, using sources such as chronicles, secular and monastic charters and inquisitorial records. A thesis in this area would also contribute to our knowledge of southern-french society in the period before, during and after the Albigensian Crusade (1209-1229).

Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox religious reforms in South-Eastern Europe c. 1560-1660

Supervisor: Liudmyla Sharipova (liudmyla.sharipova@nottingham.ac.uk)

The impact of religious change in Western and Central Europe on the areas of Eastern and East-Central Europe, whose population continued to adhere to Eastern Orthodox beliefs in the early modern period, has attracted attention of Reformation historians in the last two decades. The
region of South-Eastern Europe, however, still remains a virtual blank spot on the map of reforming movements within the Orthodox Church inspired by dynamic processes of religious renewal, which resulted from the split of Western Christendom into Catholicism and Protestantism in the 16th century. This project will consider such impulses toward religious reform as distinct from voluntary or forced conversion to another Christian faith, and unionising projects with the Catholic Church. The geographical and chronological limits of this project will have to be narrowed down further to match definable ethnic boundaries (e.g. Bulgaria, Moldavia and/ or Wallachia, or Serbia) and appropriate periodisation. The student undertaking this research will require corresponding linguistic and palaeographical skills and free access to the historical archives in the region.

Decolonisation and International Relations post-1945

Supervisor: Mathilde von Bülow (mathilde.vonbulow@nottingham.ac.uk)

The dissolution of the European colonial empires occurred at a time that saw marked changes in international relations. On the one hand, the founding of the United Nations and its specialist agencies offered a new framework for international dialogue and conflict resolution among states. On the other hand, an increasing number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) began to play an active role in global affairs. These developments affected the process of decolonisation, and were themselves influenced by the dissolution of the colonial empires, in ways that are only beginning to be understood. Various lines of inquiry could be considered for PhD study.

English Pilgrimage and Travel Writing at the End of the Middle Ages

Supervisor: Rob Lutton (rob.lutton@nottingham.ac.uk)

By the end of the fifteenth century there were hundreds of written accounts of pilgrimages to the Christian holy sites of Europe and the Holy Land. Despite this over-abundance new works continued to be written in the sixteenth century and beyond. Historians are generally agreed that the nature of the genre changed in the sixteenth century from religious writing to writing about travel per se but it is clear that this was no simple linear narrative and that it was complicated by religious confessional divisions and official changes in religion during the reformation, as well as by shifting attitudes to pilgrimage and travel themselves. In addition, it is now clear that changes that were originally thought to be novel to the sixteenth century were in fact a continuation of longer-term shifts that took place in the later middle ages. Proposals are invited that seek to explore the nature of pilgrimage and travel writing in the West, c. 1300-c. 1600. Who wrote these works and who acquired and read them? What do they reveal about changing attitudes to the East, to nature, the marvellous and the other, to the relationship between the physical and spiritual in religious life, and to understandings of Christian history in relation to other faiths?
Examining the Information Front in the Anglo-Egyptian Conflict: Empire, Nationalism and Propaganda Warfare in the Middle East 1955-1970

Supervisor:  **Spencer Mawby** *(spencer.mawby@nottingham.ac.uk)*

Between 1955 and 1970 the British and Egyptian governments were engaged in a propaganda war in the Middle East. The discrediting of western imperialism was a key aim of nationalist propaganda and the British responded by attempting to portray Nasser as a fascist dictator. New technology, most notably in the form of radio broadcasting and later with the introduction of television, played a decisive role in this confrontation. Despite the significance of these developments, the secondary literature on this subject is relatively small and fragmented and there is scope for new research which utilises sources such as memoir literature, the transcripts of radio broadcasts and the records of various British information agencies within government. The thesis would explore both the themes of the propaganda war, the means by which information and disinformation were disseminated and the connections to wider political developments in the region.

Lord William Bentinck: Soldier, Statesman, Social Improver

Supervisor:  **Richard Gaunt** *(richard.gaunt@nottingham.ac.uk)*

Lord William Bentinck (1774-1839) is well remembered for his pioneering role in the government of early-nineteenth century India where he took a particular interest in the abolition of suttee and the extension of educational provision and land reform. However, Bentinck’s role as a colonial administrator and governor was preceded by a long period as a serving soldier and diplomat during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars with France. This project allows a student to access the extensive collection of Bentinck’s papers, correspondence and journals, located at the University of Nottingham, in order to consider aspects of his personal, military and administrative life.

Moving West, Facing East: Muslim Travellers, Traders, Soldiers, and Sojourners in the Cities of the British Empire, 1834-1914

Supervisor:  **Sascha Auerbach** *(sascha.auerbach@nottingham.ac.uk)*

This project will examine the roles and experiences of Muslim migrants and settlers in the British Empire between the initiation of indentured labour in the 1830s and the outbreak of WWI in 1914. Muslim migrants and immigrants formed a vital part of the networks of trade, labour, and exploration that linked the various territories of the British Empire together. This cohort was particularly important in South Africa, where it formed a vital core of professionals and merchants in the cities, and in India, where it filled the ranks of British military forces. This
project will explore how such men and women formed their identities, interacted with the cosmopolitan populations of Britain’s imperial cities, and helped shape the historical trajectory of the British Empire.

**Rebuilding Iraqi Diplomacy after Saddam**

Supervisor:  **John W. Young** ([john.young@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:john.young@nottingham.ac.uk))

This project will investigate how an Iraqi diplomatic machine was re-created following the downfall of Saddam Hussein, focusing on the post-2004 Iraqi governments. It will look at the aims of Iraqi foreign policy and the structure of the foreign ministry, before looking at how a system of embassies was rebuilt, how the diplomatic service was staffed and such issues as its training, structure and ethos. Key questions will be how far the new diplomatic machine differed from Saddam’s (in terms of its personnel for example), how it was affected by the US/Coalition authorities and how it has reacted to sectarian divisions within the country. The student who takes on this project will need to carry out elite interviews with Iraqi policy-makers, so they will require a grasp of interview technique and an ability to build relationships with ministers and officials.

**Restoration England and the wider world 1660-1689**

Supervisor:  **David Appleby** ([david.appleby@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:david.appleby@nottingham.ac.uk))

In many respects the civil wars in Britain between 1638 and 1651, and the ‘Interregnum’ decade which followed had far-reaching effects on international relations between the English state and the wider world. It is noticeable that after the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Charles II’s regime aspired to a greater international profile than its predecessors. In large part this aspiration was driven by a range of domestic issues – political, social, cultural and economic – arising from the post-conflict culture of Restoration. This over-arching project contains the potential for several areas of inquiry suitable for PhD study, such as: changing international attitudes towards Restoration England; the beginnings of empire; the export of violence; the growth (or perhaps the reduction) of English military potential; varying levels of militarism within the different layers of English/British society.

**The USSR and the Wider World, 1917-1991: Diplomatic, Political, Economic and Cultural Relations**

Supervisor:  **Nick Baron** ([nick.baron@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:nick.baron@nottingham.ac.uk))

The extensive pre-1991 scholarship on Soviet foreign policy-making and diplomacy, and on political, economic and cultural relations between the USSR and other countries has undergone
little revision since the collapse of communism, despite the partial opening of the formerly secret Soviet diplomatic, governmental and party archives. Within the broad area outlined above, we invite research proposals which address specific dimensions of Soviet foreign policy and international relations, identifying gaps in the existing literature and/or potential to advance or correct current historical knowledge and understanding by use of new primary sources. Candidates should already have a working knowledge of relevant languages (in most cases, this will be Russian plus the language/s of one or more other countries to be studied). Dissertations will be written in English. Where appropriate, specialists in diplomatic and/or international history from the University of Nottingham UK and/or Ningbo, China, campuses will co-supervise.

Through a Veiled Window: Views of Britain and the Mandate System in the Middle East, 1918-1939

Supervisor: Sascha Auerbach (sascha.auerbach@nottingham.ac.uk)

This project explores the views expressed in the Middle East by politicians, intellectuals, religious leaders, and newspaper editors towards Britain between the two world wars. The mandate system imposed by the League of Nations was widely criticized across the Middle East. This criticism was particularly strong among Arab leaders whose expectations of national self-determination had been a strong motivation for their wartime resistance to Ottoman rule. There were others in the community, however, who saw the mandate system as a necessary stepping-stone to full independence, and harboured their own doubts about the readiness of local populations to effectively rule themselves. This project examines the different perspectives on the mandate system and Britain's stewardship in the Middle East, and through these perspectives, will help broaden the historical understanding of how nationalism, democracy, Liberalism, and other political ideologies found singular expression in the interwar period.

Transitional justice? War crime trials and the transformation of post-dictatorial societies: the case of Iraq after Saddam Hussein

Supervisor: Christian Haase (christian.haase@nottingham.ac.uk)

Since the Nuremberg Trials in 1945, various international trials, such as the trial of Saddam Hussein in 2003, have aimed to facilitate the transformation of societies that have experienced human rights abuses, war, genocide and dictatorship. Historians, journalists and other experts play a significant role in the trials. They need to prepare the documents, evaluate them in the historical context and explain the crimes in the 'court of public opinion'. The Phd will investigate this wider framework of “transitional justice” and will apply it to an in-depth study of the trial of Saddam Hussein. The PhD will build on the growing research in the field of history & International Law and will benefit from the leading role of the University of Nottingham in conducting research on international law and the history of post-dictatorial societies. The
A student who takes on this project will need to carry out interviews with Iraqi policy-makers, judges, journalists and historians, so they will require a grasp of interview technique and an ability to build relationships with academics and officials.

**Department of Music**

www.nottingham.ac.uk/music/research

**Music and Global Democracies**

Supervisor: **Robert Adlington** (robert.adlington@nottingham.ac.uk)

In contemporary struggles over democracy – struggles involving both the question of citizens’ democratic rights, and the very definition of democracy itself – music figures prominently: as agent and victim of social change, as tool for authorities and protestors, and as signifier of freedoms and control. This project examines music’s capacity to illuminate fissures in and the contestability of different concepts of democracy, as they are being played out in one or more global testing grounds for western-style democracy. The choice of case study/studies is down to the candidate, and is likely to be drawn from the Middle East, Latin America or Africa. The project will critically assess music’s roles in advancing a particular idea of democracy, the politics of labour in musical performance, the consequences of new political systems for musical patronage, and ways in which music might articulate new or alternative ideas of democracy.

**Department of Philosophy**

www.nottingham.ac.uk/philosophy/research

**Causation in Science: An interdisciplinary Study of Causal Processes**

Supervisor: **Rani Anjum** (rani.anjum@nottingham.ac.uk)

**Stephen Mumford** (stephen.mumford@nottingham.ac.uk)

Causation is central to our understanding of how matter, life, minds and society works. The project seeks a better understanding of causal processes in nature, improving our theoretical understanding of causation in general while also solving problems in the sciences in light of the theory. The project will look at how causation is understood in physics, biology, psychology and the social sciences and what problems the notion of causation raises for those sciences. Under the overall direction of Project Manager Rani Lill Anjum will be a group that includes Professors Stephen Mumford (Nottingham) and John Dupré (Exeter), two of the world’s most respected
and innovative thinkers in their fields, and a host of other Norwegian, European and North American philosophers of science and scientists. A large national and international network of senior and junior academics is already established from a wide range of research fields and institutions.

Institutional partners are SVT – Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities (Bergen), represented by Professor Roger Strand, and School of Humanities, University of Nottingham, represented by Professor Stephen Mumford. The budget is 9,244.000 Norwegian kroner over 4 years, fully financed by NFR’s FRIHUM funding scheme.

**From Explanation to Ethics and Back Again**

Supervisor:  **Uri Leibowitz** ([uri.leibowitz@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:uri.leibowitz@nottingham.ac.uk))  
**Neil Sinclair** ([neil.sinclair@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:neil.sinclair@nottingham.ac.uk))

Moral Philosophy investigates such things as the moral decisions of individuals and organizations, moral education and moral development, moral language, and moral facts. Moral philosophers seek to understand, and to communicate their understanding of, these things. To do so, they construct moral theories. Moral theories are successful if they provide a good explanation of the things with which they are concerned (e.g., the rightness/wrongness of actions; the relation between moral judgment and motivation). It is clear, then, that an account of what a good moral explanation consists in is important to moral theorising.

The underlying motivation for this project is that the notion of moral explanation is as central to moral theorising as the notion of scientific explanation is to science. The aim of the project is twofold. First we seek to improve our understanding of morality by investigating the nature of moral explanation. Our second aim is to enhance our understanding of the very nature of explanation. Moral explanations have been neglected by those investigating the nature of explanation. Proceeding from explanation to ethics and back again promises to enhance our understanding of both ethics and explanation.

**Non truth-conditional meaning**

Supervisor:  **Stefano Predelli** ([stefano.predelli@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:stefano.predelli@nottingham.ac.uk))

Stefano Predelli was been awarded a Leverhulme fellowship for the academic year 2012-2013. He was working on developing a theory for a variety of related linguistic phenomena that have traditionally been dismissed as philosophically irrelevant: fillers (such as 'uh' in spoken discourse), expressives (as in 'the damn cat'), focus (as in prosodic stress in verbal exchanges), and certain parentheticals (as in 'Felix, the cat, ...'). Stefano argues that the study of these features yields important and unexpected consequences for the central questions in the philosophy of language, in particular when it comes to the relationships between meaning, truth, and the use of language in everyday conversational exchanges.
Other Projects

We are presently pursuing certain interdisciplinary projects, engaging psychology or psychopathology directly (implicit bias--Jules Holroyd; automaticity--Jules Holroyd; schizophrenic experience--Komarine Romdenh-Romluc; and the experiential effect of the urban environment--Komarine Romdenh-Romluc).

We welcome applications for doctoral studies pertaining not only to the above projects in particular but to the areas of philosophy of mind or philosophy of psychology.

The Department also houses a number of staff (Barker, Noonan, Percival, Tallant) with research expertise on issues concerning persistence, identity and time, and an ongoing interest in pursuing new themes and ideas in these areas. We would welcome applicants to work on any of these topics.

Department of Theology and Religious Studies

www.nottingham.ac.uk/theology/research

Bible and Empire: Assyria

Supervisor:  Carly Crouch (carly.crouch@nottingham.ac.uk)

The Assyrian imperial system provides the background for much of the biblical history and text. This research area seeks to understand interaction with and the influence of Assyrian culture – religion, literature, art, administration, etc – on the southern Levant in general and on the biblical texts and their historical contexts in particular. Possible PhD topics could include studies of the influence of Assyrian literary traditions on particular biblical texts; interaction between Assyrian and Judahite religious traditions; or the effect of Assyrian hegemony on Judahite administrative practices, historical trajectory or literature.

Bible and Empire: Babylon

Supervisor:  Carly Crouch (carly.crouch@nottingham.ac.uk)

The exile of Judah’s elites to Babylon is recognised as one of the most influential events in the biblical tradition. Possible PhD research in this area could include studies of the significance of the period spent in Babylon in economic, social, historical or theological terms or a study of the influence of Babylonian religious traditions on the biblical texts.
Ethics in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near East

Supervisor: Carly Crouch (carly.crouch@nottingham.ac.uk)

This research area focuses on ethical norms in ancient Israel and Judah and the comparative study of these norms in their ancient Near Eastern context. Possible PhD topics could include research into sex and sexuality; violence at the state, community or family level; concepts of social justice; ethics in one or more of the prophetic books; the intersection between law and ethics; or the social function of ethics in particular historical contexts. Proposals in ‘Old Testament ethics’ are also welcome.

Deuteronomy

Supervisor: Carly Crouch (carly.crouch@nottingham.ac.uk)

Situated at the intersection of Pentateuch and the (so-called) Deuteronomistic History and the source for much of the theology and ideology of the biblical literature, Deuteronomy has a critical place in biblical research. Research on Deuteronomy might include thematic, literary, redactional or historical topics; proposals on topics in ethics are particularly welcome.

History of Israel and Judah

Supervisor: Carly Crouch (carly.crouch@nottingham.ac.uk)

The history and historiography of Israel and Judah, via both the Hebrew Bible and extra-biblical evidence, continues to be a major research subject in biblical studies. PhD topics in this area could cover any aspect of the history of Israel and Judah from the pre-monarchic to post-exilic periods, focussing on specific individuals, groups, events or books.

In History and Tradition

Supervisor: Carly Crouch (carly.crouch@nottingham.ac.uk)

A major area of research in biblical studies is the way in which historical persons and places are depicted and used for rhetorical, literary and theological purposes. Possible PhD research in this area could include studies of the role of Nebuchadnezzar in the biblical prophetic or historical texts; the development of Jerusalem and Babylon from physical cities to symbolic figures in the prophetic material; or the characterisation of the Assyrian empire in prophetic and historical texts.
Prophecy and the Prophetic Books

Supervisor: Carly Crouch (carly.crouch@nottingham.ac.uk)

The prophetic texts constitute one of the most intriguing and most fruitful areas of research in the biblical canon. Research in the prophetic books might take the form of redactional studies of particular books; literary analyses of certain books or passages; historical discussions taking the prophetic texts as a starting point; or thematic studies addressing particular topics (e.g., sin and punishment, ethics, attitudes toward cult, social justice, social context of prophet and/or audience).

The Theology and Legacy of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328)

Supervisor: Jon Hoover (john.hoover@nottingham.ac.uk)

Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) was a prominent fourteenth-century Sunni Muslim reformer from Damascus whose theology has been sharply contested within the Muslim community from his own time down to the present day. This project seeks to understand Ibn Taymiyya’s thought within its historical and intellectual contexts, trace the appropriation and contestation of his theology in late medieval and modern Islamic discourses, and explore reasons for the enduring Muslim discussion of his ideas. This project is focusing especially on the following areas of research: Ibn Taymiyya’s thought on God’s attributes, Shi’ism, Sufism and Christianity; the use of Ibn Taymiyya’s theology by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350) and other late medieval figures; the role of Ibn Taymiyya’s writings on modern Shi‘i-Sunni polemics; and the appropriation of Ibn Taymiyya in contemporary Islamism and global Salafism.

Warfare in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near East

Supervisor: Carly Crouch (carly.crouch@nottingham.ac.uk)

This research area addresses the norms, practices and consequences of warfare in Israel and Judah, the Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East. Research topics in this area might include the study of warfare in particular biblical books; reconstructions of military practices in Israel and Judah on the basis of biblical texts and archaeological evidence; analysis of interaction and influence among ancient Near Eastern militaries; or examination of the ideological, theological or ethical aspects of warfare.